

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 07841 011205Z

43

ACTION EA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3632

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 7841

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH, US

SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT ON THAI-U.S. RELATIONS

1. PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT PRAMOT, IN A MAY 1 QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION WITH A U.S. NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE DELEGATION, MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS ABOUT THAI-U.S. RELATIONS. HE NOTED THAT PRESSURES FROM BOTH LEFTISTS AND FROM RIGHTIST NATIONALISTS MADE THE U.S. TROOP PRESENCE A POLITICAL ISSUE, COMMENTING IN ADDITION THAT NO COUNTRY LIKES TO HAVE FOREIGN TROOPS ON ITS SOIL. WHEN FORMING HIS GOVERNMENT, HE THEREFORE HAD TO DECLARE TO PARLIAMENT THAT U.S. TROOPS WOULD BE WITHDRAWN FROM THAILAND WITHIN ONE YEAR, DEPENDING ON THE TACTICAL SITUATION IN THE AREA AND FRIENDLY NEGOTIATIONS.

2. ASKED WHETHER SOVIET NAVAL ACTIVITIES IN INDOCHINA COULD CAUSE A CHANGE IN THE THAI STANCE TOWARD THE U.S. TROOP PRESENCE, KHUKRIT REPLIED THAT HE HAD ALREADY DISCERNED SOME CHANGE IN THESE ATTITUDES. HE HAD RECEIVED LETTERS URGING HIM TO HOLD OFF ON WITHDRAWALS. IF SOVIET SHIPS APPEARED IN THE GULF OF THAILAND, OR IF THERE WERE HEAVY THREATS TO THE

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PAGE 02 BANGKO 07841 011205Z

THAI BORDER, THESE ATTITUDES COULD SHIFT COMPLETELY.

3. KHUKRIT SAID THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS HELPED THAILAND A GREAT DEAL, AND THAT THAILAND WANTS TO MAINTAIN ITS FRIENDSHIP WITH THE U.S., FOREVER IF POSSIBLE. HE MENTIONED THAT THE UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE POSITION THAT THE U.S. CONGRESS WILL TAKE MAKES ASSURANCES ABOUT UPHOLDING U.S. COMMITMENTS TO THAILAND DIFFICULT TO CREDIT. KHUKRIT SAID THINGS WOULD BE FINE IF DEFENSE COLLEGES COULD RUN THE GOVERNMENTS.

4. ADDRESSEES SHOULD BE AWARE THAT REMARKS THAT FOREIGNOFFICIALS MAKE TO THE NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE ARE PRIVILEGED. THEY SHOULD THEREFORE NOT BE DISSEMINATED FURTHER OR REFERRED TO IN MESSAGES OR CONVERSATIONS.
MASTERS

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